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ABSTRACT

This paper presents a rationale for establishing a global education curriculum at Ocean County College (OCC) (New Jersey) and proposes a workable curriculum, along with suggestions for implementation. The author distinguishes between multicultural and global education--both curricula address issues of cultural diversity, human rights, and prejudice reduction, but multiculturalism is primarily concerned with these issues in a single country context and global education makes cross-national comparisons. The author summarizes a number of research studies of American college students' international knowledge and provides OCC student demographic data as a means to highlight the need for global education at OCC. The author notes the challenge of increasing the perceived relevance of international knowledge among students who are primarily concerned with graduating, transferring to a four-year institution, paying tuition, and finding employment and childcare. Global issues that should be addressed through the development of a new OCC global education curriculum include human rights, world population demographics, refugees, environmental conservation, global economics, health and nutrition, and global security. According to the author, the infusion of these topics into the OCC curriculum is a timely response to the heightened global awareness that accompanied the events of international terrorism on September 11th, 2001. (Contains 10 references.) (RC)

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GLOBAL EDUCATION FOR OCEAN COUNTY COLLEGE

BY

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JC020708

It was Einstein who said that "the world is one or none".¹ As every day goes by, we can see a broadening of the scope of problems people encounter, an overlapping of topics, a globalization of subjects. While in the past the world was perceived as something far away, the world is now part of our immediate environment.² Recent technology not only has contributed to the shrinking of the world, it has accelerated this trend.

The primary purpose of this paper is to present a rationale for establishing a global education curriculum at Ocean County College [OCC] and to propose a workable global curriculum with a few suggestions for implementation. To commence, with faculty cooperation, global issues can be incorporated into all courses at OCC: psychology, sociology, political science, economics, criminal justice, history, mathematics, education, social work, nursing, music, art, English, languages, and the natural sciences. Next, it will be necessary to add some courses such as World History 1 and 2, World Religions, World Geography, and International Relations. If this can happen across the curriculum, OCC can then start to move into global studies curriculum certification and/or a program. This might be integrated with the diversity requirements and perhaps ultimately with the education degree.

To avoid confusion between multicultural and global education, some definitions are appropriate. Although not all educators would agree with this definition, for the purpose of this paper the following distinctions will be made. Multicultural and global education share the topics of cultural diversity, human rights, and prejudice reduction. But the approaches differ most significantly in that multicultural education deals with these topics in relation to the country in which the student resides, while global education makes cross-national comparisons among these topics.³ For example, various conceptions of children's

rights could be explored within the United States as a multicultural approach, while comparing children's rights among the United States, Sweden, Turkey, and India would be a global approach.

Rationale

With the advent of the twenty-first century, some educators as well as parents and everyday citizens became increasingly cognizant that nations and people depend on each other for survival and that they need expertise to carry out the unique requirements of this century. However, with the beginning of this century, many people did not view global education as important to their daily lives.⁴ I could hear many students claim emphatically that what took place half way around the world had nothing to do with them. Disinterest in world events was noticeable with echoes of "How does this affect us at home?"

One study conducted in 1981 by the Council on Learning involved comparing 3,000 university freshmen, seniors, and community college students on international knowledge and attitudes. From 101 questions asked, the mean score of the university freshmen was 41.9; seniors, 50.5, and community college sophomores, 40.5. The researchers concluded that these scores exemplified a substantial dearth of global knowledge. The entire sample had little interest, and felt that global issues were of little importance. Moreover, the study discovered that education majors had the lowest scores on the global knowledge test.⁵

Dorman [1992] called for an end to cultural self-centeredness in the American curriculum and asked for an attempt to "denationalize the curriculum," creating one that emphasizes global mutual interdependence.⁶ According to Bennett, global education has not become an essential part of traditional education in the United States. Instead, schools are patterned after the predominant culture that originated primarily in Britain and Western

Europe.⁷ As an example, there is a paucity of information provided OCC students regarding Muslims and their knowledge of Islam. Furthermore, the teacher education curriculum will have to expand its emphasis on international subjects if global education is to become prevalent in the classrooms of this country. Nonetheless, we confront an obstacle in instituting these objectives when, according to the American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, only about 5% of the nation's public school teachers have had academic grounding in international topics.⁸

One of the foremost promoters of global education in the United States is the National Council for the Social Studies. These educators point out that a curriculum that results in graduates with provincial awareness is no longer sufficient. But the back-to-basics movement, so popular at present in the United States, has not defined global education as essential knowledge, even though there is nothing innately incompatible between global knowledge and a proficiency of basic verbal and quantitative abilities. In spite of the fact that many other nations have confirmed second language and global literacy as significant fundamental knowledge, these areas are often regarded as electives in the American curriculum.⁹ Clearly, global education is, at best, in its infancy.

Judging by what I have heard, many OCC students' main concerns seemed to be graduating, transferring, paying the bills, protecting the welfare of their children, and/or getting a job. Moreover, this attitude is shared by the general population. I regularly encounter people who can not cope well dealing critically with the limited perspectives of their cultural group or nationality. Some believe that global education would detract from national unity in the United States and diminish national pride. This is rooted in either/or

logic so prevalent in Western thinking: you either favor the patriotic national interest, or you support global interdependence. The two are not compatible.

Then came **September 11th, 2001**. World issues now became local issues in a very real sense. Afghanistan is not as distant as it was previously.¹⁰ A sense of urgency has now changed the public's view of Islam as a whole, and created the danger of public paranoia. While newscasters were generally careful not to blame Islam as a whole, many of them added to the confusion about the role of the religion. President George W. Bush called for a "crusade" against terrorism after 9-11 with little awareness of what this means from the Islamic perspective. The world can no longer afford such ignorance, especially from our leaders. Against this background of insensitivity and prejudice, it is not surprising that the American public, and specifically OCC students, find it difficult to understand the current Islamic resurgence. It has now become perilous not to have a global view and a long-term perspective. Global education has now become a high-priority.¹¹

Demographics of Ocean County and Ocean County College

The state census of 2000 lists the Ocean County population as 510,916, with the following racial/ethnic breakdown in percentages: Caucasian - 93%; African American - 3%; American Indian/Alaskan Native - 0.1%; Asian - 1.3%; Hawaiian/Pacific Islanders - none; Hispanic/Latino - 5.0%; Unknown - 1.2%; and 2 or more identities - 1.3.¹²

The OCC Fact Book records for the year 2001 a full-time student population of 9,318 and part-time of 7,248. The total number of students specifically enrolled in Elementary Education for the year 2000 was 306. The average age of full-time male students is 20.4 and for females 21.5 years. Part-time students are significantly older. The average age of males is 28.6 and females 32.0 years.¹³

Meaningful for this paper is the racial/ethnic breakdown in percentages for full-time students [2000]: African American - 3.5%; American Indian/Alaskan Native - 0.4%; Asian/Pacific Islander - 2.3%; Hispanic - 5.5%; Caucasian - 82.0%; Unknown - 6.3%. For part-time students: African American - 4.0%; American Indian/Alaskan Native - 0.4%; Asian/Pacific Islander 1.8%; Hispanic - 5.7%; Caucasian - 81.7%; and Unknown - 6.5%.¹⁴ The racial/ethnic breakdowns of the county and the college are similar. As a result, many of our students may not have been exposed in their public education or in their neighborhoods to much human diversity. Since both the college and the county lack population diversity, the importance of global education at OCC becomes inescapable.

Furthermore, only three colleges in New Jersey have an international relations office with the main task of sending their students abroad to study for a semester. No New Jersey college has a program or office for global education.¹⁵ OCC could be on the cutting edge of an important educational program for the 21st century.

Global Curriculum

The *Chronicle of Higher Education* notes that the 9-11 attacks have noticeably changed student interest in specific subjects, and may have modified various subjects. Students are now forced to realize that many of the world's problems are far from being solved. Many courses have a new relevance. Students and professors alike have a new sense of engagement.¹⁶ In a similar vein, *The New York Times Education Life* supplement records that "today's undergraduates hunger to understand the volatile world now facing them."¹⁷ But is Ocean County College prepared to teach them what they need and want to know?

Human Rights

No place on earth, including the United States, affords its people the human rights guaranteed in the preamble to the United States Constitution and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights. One of the main objectives of human rights instruction is to decrease the gap between the human rights that citizens of this world should be granted and those rights they in fact experience.¹⁸ Furthermore, a serious threat to human rights in one part of the world will often spread to other regions.

The rights of women in the world should also be of primary concern to educators. Most women do not have equal status with men in terms of power, wealth, and opportunity. Likewise, most societies are presently distinguished by an inequitable dispersal of resources and a hierarchical social class system. This calls for a variety of inquiries into human rights, particularly in the social sciences. The empowerment of many of the world's women and the enhancement of their health, political, social, and economic standing is a noteworthy topic of human rights as well as of population management.¹⁹

Assistant Professor Ryder encourages her Latin American History students to become cognizant of the human rights granted all people by the United Nations Declaration and to help them investigate infringements of these rights throughout Guatemala, El Salvador, Colombia, and Brazil. In Foundations of Education, Assistant Professor Kenneally noted that she could have her students investigate different countries systems and philosophies of educating their children.

Population

The 1994 United Nations International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo, advocated a 20 year Plan for Action to stabilize earth's population.²⁰ It is significant for students to comprehend the demographic facts of the

world's population. OCC students need to be made cognizant of the varying rates of population expansion all through the world and examine the ramifications.

Professor Birdsell indicated that in her Statistics classes students could estimate population size and economic conditions among various countries. In her Contemporary Health course, Assistant Professor Malachowski noted that she could discuss how various countries incorporate family planning into their health services. Developmental psychology classes could contrast life spans in different countries, birth rate, infant mortality rates, and care of the aged.

Refugees

Ethnic diversity is a feature of human geography nearly everywhere on the planet. Some sources that cause human displacement are political, economic, environmental, and ethnic tensions. Conflicts brought about by ethnic hate have been epidemic recently. Furthermore, this is an effectual theme that advances topics such as persecution, discrimination, prejudice, poverty, and displacement.²¹

Macroeconomics classes might research poverty and wage inequities that forced people to leave their homes and become refugees. Sociology and psychology courses could look into the key problems that people face when they become refugees. How might they be solved? Political science classes might address how various countries cope with large additions of new people. The nursing department could explore the unique medical problems encountered in the refugee camps.

The Environment

Humans have always used the environment for their own purposes and have sometimes harmed it. In 1970 the United States Congress established the Environmental

Protection Agency whose entire obligation is to preserve and safeguard the environment for future generations. During a 1992 conference on the environment and global development, The United Nations announced that the conservation of the environment should be the world's foremost priority. However, if serious action is not taken the future health of the planet remains in jeopardy.²² Edward O. Wilson noted recently that "for every person in the world to reach present U.S. levels of consumption with existing technology would require four more planet Earths."²³ Frequently Carl Sagan has said, "If we do not speak for Earth, who will?"

It is important for students to recognize that environmental education is a global issue. Soil erosion, deforestation, fossil fuels, nuclear energy, chemical wastes, and pesticides are some ways humans have influenced the environment.²⁴ Environmental Science classes already address these issues, however much more could be accomplished in other areas. History classes could investigate how oil was one of the background reasons for the Gulf War. The energy problem and the concomitant sociopolitical risks could be explored in political science sections.

Health and Nutrition

In 1948 The United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted as a non-legal binding document declaring a resolution to encourage universal respect for human rights. Article 25 states:

1. Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social

services, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

2. Motherhood and childhood are entitled to special care and assistance. All children, whether born in or out of wedlock, shall enjoy the same social protection.

In the same year the World Health Organization was chartered with similar objectives.²⁵

Students could explore how various countries have reacted to these documents.

The Nursing Department could make proposals to improve the state of the world's health.

How effective have the policies and programs been in decreasing the number of people affected by disease over the last 10 years? Professor Baker's Introduction to Philosophy students explore the metaphysical question concerning the relationship of mind and body from the various perspectives of Africa, Asia, Native Americans, and European/U.S.A.

Abnormal Psychology students could examine various ideas of mental health and psychotherapy.

Global Economics

There are many different economies at present, such as forager, agrarian, pastoral, socialist, capitalist, and democratic socialist societies. World trade and multinational corporations could provide arresting examples of the interdependency of nations in the global economy. The Coca-Cola Corporation has even used a global unity theme in its advertising: "I'd like to teach the world to sing". In today's world no nation stands alone economically.²⁶

In macroeconomics class the students could investigate how many countries are involved with the production of a VW New Beetle. By examining the development of societies throughout the world and their economies, students can see how the production and distribution of goods and services differ. Sociology students could explore the impact a multinational corporation, such as McDonalds, has on a host nation in the developing world. Instructor Weitz commented that her Computer Literacy students could discuss the availability and impact of technology between the developed and developing nations, and address ways technology might make a difference if, in the developing countries, their citizens had access to computers.

Global Security

The twentieth century saw unparalleled achievements in killing. In a century of two world wars and many smaller ones, including civil wars, about 40 million men have died in uniform. But non-combatants have also been killed - approximately 150 million.²⁷ In 1945 the United Nations was established to "save succeeding generations from the scourge of war" and "to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law may be maintained". Article 3 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to life, liberty and the security of person."²⁸

Acting in partnerships with the United Nations and its Specialized Agencies, Non-governmental Organizations, educational institutions, and citizen networks have advanced education for peace by linking ideals with extensive research and practice. The Hague Agenda for Peace and Justice for the 21st Century [United Nations Document: Ref A/54/98] is a significant example of such work. One of the first principles of this document

is the necessity of instituting systematic education for peace. According to the Agenda, their Global Campaign for Peace Education aims to "support the United Nations Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the children of the world and to introduce peace and human rights education into all educational institutions, including medical and law schools." Since the year 2000 is the International Year for the Culture of Peace [United Nations Document A/RES/52/15] and the period 2001-2010 is the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-violence for the children of the world [UN Document A/RES/53/25],²⁹ there is no better time for Ocean County College to join the global movement to educate our students for a sustainable culture of peace.

After September 11th, 2001 it is becoming clear that the current wars are different and of a type for which the United Nations was not designed. Teaching peace will become a challenge as this war on terrorism continues and patriotism takes precedence over global responsibilities and understandings. Here, though, are a few suggestions out of many possibilities.

The various causes of war could be explored in psychology, sociology, history, and political science courses. In United States History a typical unit on the American Revolution usually does not deal with questions such as: What were the views of colonists who wanted to remain loyal to England? Were the revolutionaries a significant majority of the colonial population or a determined minority? Why did the British government consider the colonists' demands to be unreasonable? Why did the British colonists in Canada chose not to revolt from Britain? Physics classes might want to look at how different societies choose to invest their money in scientific research. For example, Switzerland has many world-class physicists, but it would be improbable for those physicists to apportion

their skills to creating *Star Wars* lasers to design a nuclear shield.³⁰ Ethical issues encompassing science and scientific applications also have global consequences, and study of these issues should be standard in all science classrooms.

Conclusion

More than 85 percent of the world's six billion people are from non-western ethnic and cultural heritage. We must recognize and value the many contributions of western education that have lent much toward understanding and resolving some problems. However, it is now apparent that a greater attempt must be made to acknowledge non-western wisdom and cultural experiences.³¹

OCC needs to acknowledge the emerging global challenges of overpopulation, poverty, environmental desecration, global economics, human rights, refugees, and ethno-political warfare. The appearance of a global civilization rationally demands the promotion of education that is likewise global. Human consciousness has forever been changed for having viewed our planet as "spaceship earth".

FOOTNOTES

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